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Conference Theme:
Work, Life and Environment Relations: An International Perspective

BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS

ABSTRACTS

Conference convened by
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
Abstracts submitted for consideration for inclusion in the Conference are subject to a blind reviewing process.


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The attraction and retention of teachers is a problem faced by schools worldwide, and Australia, and particularly Western Australia (WA) (Department of Education, Science and Training [DEST] 2003), are no exceptions. Solutions to this problem may be the better targeting of attraction and retention drivers of value to teachers. This paper presents the findings from a qualitative study that used in-depth interviews with serving and retired teachers to interrogate the reasons teachers are attracted to the profession and what drives their decision to either stay or leave. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of teachers cited intrinsic motivators as the reasons for joining the teaching profession and those with higher intrinsic motivational drivers exhibited a more positive intention to remain. On the other hand sixty-one percent (61%) also viewed extrinsic rewards in the form of working conditions as important. Overall, working conditions, such as pay and the school conditions were important influences on retention, once teachers with the relevant intrinsic motivations have been attracted to the profession.
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ABSTRACT

With the increasing globalisation of the world economy and the tendency for multinational corporations (MNCs) to export international HR practices to their foreign subsidiaries, a burgeoning literature has emerged on the drivers and prospects of such practices. A central issue in this body of literature is whether MNCs should adopt locally established reward policies or seek instead to transfer their global practices. In this regard, the issue of the impact of the institutional environment has come to the fore. Drawing on empirical data from the Nigerian banking sector, in this paper, we argue that although the institutional environment plays a key role in shaping reward practices, the rational action of players (MNCs) must not be underestimated, particularly in weak and liberal environments where they have a high managerial autonomy.
EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION: A CASE STUDY OF RC AND SABIC IN THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA:

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ABSTRACT

The paper analyses the important employee empowerment measures and based on which attempts to develop a model for employee satisfaction. Using primary data collected from RC and SABIC, the study tries to prove that employee empowerment measures are a must for the employees' satisfaction, which is the backbone of a successful institution. The study points to the need for streamlining various measures of employee empowerment to meet the needs of the institutional objectives by ensuring job satisfaction of the employees.
AN ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS IN MAURITIUS: THE CASE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS:

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ABSTRACT

This paper assesses the state of employment relations in Mauritius by analyzing data from the private and public sector organizations of Mauritius. The paper initially summarises, the theoretical framework governing employment relations and then presents empirical results of the study. The findings are based on two questionnaire surveys, one for management and the other for employees together with unstructured interviews to explore the field. The data used in the paper forms part of a wider study and will contribute to the field of employment relations and open avenues for further research.
ABSTRACT

On 1 January 2010 the complex system of state and commonwealth regulation of industrial relations in Australia was replaced with a single Commonwealth system. In all Australian states, except Western Australia, the Commonwealth Fair Work Act 2009 became the system to regulate industrial relations within all public and private sector firms. Features of the new system include: a set of 10 minimum National Employment Standards; modern awards applying to specific industries and occupations; a national minimum wage order (where it applies); enterprise bargaining; and protection from unfair dismissal.

The greatest impact of this change would have been felt by small firms which were predominantly covered by state systems of industrial relations. Small firms have traditionally relied on the industrial award system to outline terms and conditions of employment and reforms of this type put pressure on them, like all other firms, to take greater responsibility for managing their employees appropriately. For many small firms with limited resources, change such as this could present problems. The purpose of this paper is to investigate and review the arguments for change and the effect of these changes on small firms. Materials available in the public domain – media reports and stories, union, employer and small business association surveys, reports and comments and data collected by government bodies where available – form the evidence drawn upon in the paper. As such this is the first part of a larger project looking at the costs and benefits of regulating small firm industrial relations.
IDENTIFYING SAFETY VALUES IN PQR HOSPITAL:
A WAY TOWARD ACHIEVING HIGH PERFORMANCE:

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ABSTRACT

Applying safety values in hospitals is important and a must as safety values will support the hospital to achieve a better performance. In fact, all hospitals may claim that they have adopted safety values for their patients. However, facts show that there are still many adverse events take place due to the lack of implementing the safety values. In Indonesia the statistics of adverse events is not properly managed and presented; adverse events happen but many are not well noted and reported. This article aims to identify safety values applied in PQR, which is one of the most modern hospitals in Indonesia. The PQR safety values which are part of its safety culture will be identified through questionnaire introduced by Sorra and Nieva. Ten dimensions of values will be used to identify the PQR safety values. The findings are expected to provide a clear picture to which extent safety values have been implemented. This study also describes the gap between the expected and the actual of the safety values. Eventually, based on the findings, it is expected that the PQR can improve its safety values properly to achieve high organization performance.
SOLVING UNEMPLOYMENT: AN ANALYSIS OF TWO AUSTRALIAN POLICY INITIATIVES:

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School of Management

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ABSTRACT

This paper will examine in more detail two main policy initiatives (one implicit and the other explicit) relating levels of Australian unemployment that have been adopted by various governments since 2000; both the conservative-liberal Howard government as well as the labour Rudd-Gillard governments. It should be recognised at the beginning that even though these governments are quite different in their political beliefs, they have adopted quite similar policy stances when looking at the issue of unemployment. First, there is the fundamental underlying principle that solving unemployment means lowering the number of people unemployed: that is, it is good for everybody who is able to work works. Given this basic principle this paper will not consider contributions that Australians could make to their country’s future development and prosperity other than through employment, such as raising a family, attending an educational institution or volunteering, notwithstanding that these are also considered to be important. For the purposes of this paper they are just considered out of scope.

Using the basic principle outlined above, the paper will focus on two broad policy initiatives which again have common support by the different governments. The first policy initiative (seen as part of overall government macro-policy) can be encapsulated as: unemployment can be solved indirectly through activities that allow the Australian economy to continue to grow. Essentially, the argument is that as overall GDP increases, more jobs will be created and so the unemployed should find increasing opportunities to get back into work. The second policy initiative (seen as more an interventionist micro-policy) can be encapsulated as: most unemployed people have moderate to significant skills or knowledge deficits; through increased training opportunities they will be able to address these deficits and so improve their chances of getting back into work. Based on the analysis conducted, this paper will argue that these views really only propose simplistic solutions to what is a complex and multi-dimensional problem. It will be argued that at the very least, unemployment should be disaggregated into a range of variables and that these variables should be individually investigated in terms of what policy options should be developed to maximise the chances of the unemployed finding another rewarding job.

Recent labour force (and statistics related to those not in the labour force) time series statistics published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, as well as official labour market statistics compiled by Centrelink, will provide the analysis data. Variables to be analysed will include traditional labour force variables such as numbers of full-time and part-time employed, numbers of unemployed, as well as non-labour force variables such as those people not in the labour force but who would like to work. The table below gives examples of what variables will be used in the analysis. The analysis will include both graphical presentation and review of these time series variables as well as an evaluation of volatility (both persistent and non-persistent) demonstrated by these variables over the last decade.
<table>
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CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION: A CASE STUDY OF DOCTORS' PAY IN TWO CHINESE PUBLIC HOSPITALS:

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ABSTRACT

The paper evaluates submerged discontent among Chinese doctors regarding their pay and patterns of resolution, in particular doctors’ responses through formal and informal actions in the context of health service marketisation. Based on a case study of two public hospitals in China, the paper reveals that marketisation has intensified Chinese doctors’ dissatisfaction over pay. Because of authoritarian management and compliant trade unions, the conflict between doctors and their employers cannot be accommodated through collective channels. Instead doctors’ discontent can only be expressed through individual, subtle and informal activities. Meanwhile doctors’ professional society is expanding its influence, showing a desire to develop health professionals’ group identity and protect members’ interests more effectively in the future.
AGENCY WORK IN SINGAPORE: A REAL OR PSEUDO CHOICE:

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ABSTRACT

This paper studies agency workers and the agency work industry in Singapore. We analyse the characteristics of agency workers based on an interview of 88 agency workers in terms of demographics, job classification, job tenure, fringe benefits received, knowledge on labour legislation, awareness and perception of representation by trade unions and prospects of agency work.

The interview results reveal the following:

Among the 88 agency workers, 25 are below 20 and 51 are between aged 21 to 29. 51 of them are female and the majority of the agency workers interviewed are Chinese. We are very surprised to find that these agency workers are quite educated. 33 of them have completed university education and 43 have completed upper secondary education.

In terms of sectoral distribution, 27 are in administration and accounting, 25 in sales and marketing, and 9 each in manufacturing and banking. Of course, agency work by nature is short term. We find that 39 of them work full-time during the agency work and 33 of them worked part-time. Among the 39 who worked full-time, only 13 worked more than a year. For those who worked part-time, only 2 worked part-time for more than a year.

On whether agency workers receive fringe benefits, it is found that of the 12 who worked on an ad hoc contract, only 5 received fringe benefits. Of the 37 who worked part-time, 11 received fringe benefits. And of the 39 who worked full-time, 26 received fringe benefits. Hence, we can see that agency work carries limited fringe benefits.

On knowledge of the Employment Act, only 2 of the 88 agency workers interviewed know the entire Employment Act. 20 know certain parts of the Employment Act. And 54 heard about the Act but not the details. 12 of the interviewees are not aware of the existence of the Employment Act.

In Singapore, workers are protected by the Workmen Compensation Act. The majority of the agency workers interviewed have little or no knowledge of the Compensation Act. As the labour movement is Singapore is aggressive, we want to know whether the agency workers are aware of our labour unions. 54 of them said that they are aware of our unions while 34 said they are not aware. As many as 58 of them are indifferent to whether unions can represent them.

As to whether agency work is regarded as a dead end job or a stepping stone to regular work. 8 of the 12 workers who are on ad hoc contract said that it is a dead end job with no prospect, 13 of the 24 agency workers who are on part-time contract and 9 of the 39 who were given full-time contract shared this opinion.
ABSTRACT

The employer–employee relationship is underpinned by a psychological contract, which refers to employee beliefs about the exchange of employee contributions and employer inducements. However, there is limited empirical and theoretical guidance on how employers can shape psychological contracts to meet employees’ needs. Meeting these needs starts with an understanding of what employees would like to contribute to their employing organisations and what organisational inducements they would like to receive, as part of their psychological contracts. Based on an interview study with six Singapore public sector employees, we explore the possibility of using employees’ career stage perceptions as a means for structuring their preferences on psychological contract contributions and inducements. This study’s insights will help organisations create desirable psychological contracts and retain valued employees.
ABSTRACT

The Ministry of Justice of Thailand (MOJ) has seen the potential of restorative justice and intends to implement this concept more effectively. Initial responses indicate that widespread application of restorative justice principles will be appreciated by the public, and will affect impressive financial savings for both the government and the public. The current structure of the MOJ does not support this ambitious program. Research shows that the Provincial Justice Offices (PJOs) need to be restructured and a number of other changes need to be instituted, primarily the thoroughgoing adoption of the matrix organizational model and the redesign of specific jobs. Of principal importance in the latter category are redefinitions of the status, job description, job specification and authority of PJO administrators. Additional specific recommendations for changes in the PJOs' staff sizes and precise definitions of the missions of PJO employees at all levels are presented.
ABSTRACT

In today’s business parlance, maintaining and managing relationships calls for mature handling. Frankly speaking, it is not a question of strategy that gets one into trouble; rather it is a question of emotions of workforce one deals with.

There are studies which have focused on the relationship between employee attitudes (Ashworth, Higgs, Schneider, Shepherd, & Carr, 1995; Ostroff, 1992; Ryan, Schmit, & Johnson, 1996), leadership (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003; Howell & Avolio, 1993), or training (Shaw, Delery, Jenkins, & Gupta, 1998) and business-unit outcomes. Yet, little attention being paid in terms of empirical verification to ascertain the impact of incentives on firms’ operating performance even though this level of analysis is crucial to an organisation’s operating performance through outcomes such as employee retention, employee productivity, operating cost & profitability (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002).

This paper presents a framework for understanding the interrelationship of Incentive as Compensation Strategy, Organisational Climate & Firms’ Operating Performance. Also, in this paper, the cause & consequence of Incentive as Compensation strategy is being explained through a framework by combining both the Equity & Discrepancy theory.

Accordingly, based on the empirical study in manufacturing set up, the paper attempts to: (i) define, develop & measure an incentive framework as it applies to operation strategy; (ii) show how it leads to better operating performance; (iii) investigate the interrelationship between incentives, organizational climate and firms’ operating performance; iv) to ascertain whether pay policies influence the actual pay and thereby have an impact on procedural justice perception;

A conceptual model of Firms’ operating performance is used with Organisational Climate as a mediating variable between the independent variable Incentive and the dependent variable of Firms’ operating performance.

Data was collected from ten manufacturing set ups & a total of 500 responses were collected & analysed using statistical tools & techniques (e.g. correlation, multiple regression etc.).

Results revealed that incentives directly affect the Organisational Climate parameters as well as the operational performance parameters like employee retention, employee productivity, operating cost & profitability.
REFERENCES
YOUTH CAREER CHOICES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE ASPIRATIONS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS AND DANCERS IN TRAINING:

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the findings of the first phase of a broader study into the career aspirations of young people and the attraction and retention drivers for early career employees. Attraction and retention of staff are critical issues globally, and the participation of younger people in employment is a significant area of focus – economically, politically and socially – for Australia. The Australian Government’s 2010 Intergenerational Report highlighted Australia’s declining labour force participation and population ageing as critical issues for the economy. The proportion of the population aged 5 to 24 years has also decreased from 37% in 1970 to an estimated 26% in 2010, placing increasing pressure on workforce participation rates (2010).

A qualitative, comparative methodology was utilised to gain a comprehensive and rich insight into the views and career expectations of young people. Focus groups were conducted with two cohorts of young people between the ages of 14–17 years of age: those in full–time secondary schooling and those enrolled in full–time dance training (ballet) undertaking their secondary studies via distance education/remote schooling. A study of young ballet dancers in training provides an excellent background and context for a comparative study into the relationship between career choice and intrinsic rewards. The key areas of enquiry in this phase included the critical career attraction drivers and career choices of this Generation (Generation Z); the reasons for those choices; concerns they have about their career of choice; and their attitudes toward work/life balance in the future.

The study findings suggest that whilst there is a difference in the specific foci of commitment (to the career they have chosen) there are similarities regarding their consideration of future work/life balance and the implications for future career choices. It is clear from both cohorts that young people are far more flexible in their career choices and even more fatalistic than their baby boomer counterparts. There is also a strong theme running through all of the focus groups – irrespective of gender, school and educational choice – of wanting to follow their passion. Their desire to follow their passion continued to their thoughts and discussions on career retention levers – as long as they were enjoying their work they would stay. The findings also clearly supported a strong linkage between intrinsic factors and the choice and sustainability of a career. Whilst money was clearly identified as a factor in career choice amongst a number of male respondents in the school based cohort, job satisfaction, feedback and promotion outweighed this in terms of importance.

The impact of these findings on employers, and their attraction and reward strategies, are significant. It is also clear that the lack of risk aversion young people have to changing their careers to achieve better work life balance poses challenges for employers to ensure that the significant investment they make in their young employees is returned. A greater insight into the impact of the role of peers, recognition of changing career drivers and needs, as well as igniting that passion for their work, will all lead to a better and more strategic linkage between HR recruitment, selection, work design and development strategies and processes.
THE LABOUR MARKET, IMMIGRATION AND THE BUILDING OF DUBAI:

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ABSTRACT

Dubai has evolved from a sparsely populated desert region on the Arabian Gulf to a dynamic and fast growing city. The boom in construction and services has been built upon a large immigrant labour force with a labour market that is highly segregated – firstly between local and expatriate workers, and secondly among the expatriate workers depending on whether they are categorised as professional, construction or service sector workers. Despite the rapid growth and manifestations of modernity in Dubai stories have emerged concerning the violation of human rights particularly with respect to contracted migrant workers. Despite its rapid transformation Dubai does not have in place the institutions or infrastructure that support and protect fundamental labour standards. Where there are unregulated migrant programs (as in Dubai), workers are potentially subject to exploitation. This paper examines the labour market and immigration in Dubai and considers whether growth has been compromised by promoting fundamental labour standards and whether this is likely to change post GFC.
ABSTRACT

Judge and Colquitt (2004) stated that “research on organisational justice has demonstrated that concerns about fairness can affect the attitudes and behaviors of employees” (p. 395). However, this research has taken place mostly in Westernized settings, particularly the US. The extent to which organisational justice relates to outcomes varies across cultures but cultural differences regarding perceptions of fairness tend to be ignored. The present study tests the four established dimensions of organisational justice towards job satisfaction and employee turnover using collectivism as a moderator. In order to evoke an impact with respect to collectivism a sample of 349 New Zealand Maori employees is used. Maori are the indigenous people of New Zealand and are classed as a collectivist society and we test whether these cultural approaches affect the influence of organisational justice towards these outcomes.

The paper makes three contributions. Using structural equation modeling, it establishes the four dimensions of organisational justice hold within an indigenous population, confirming the dimensional structure of organisational justice with a new employee population. Secondly, the influence of organisational justice is supported towards job satisfaction and turnover intentions, and importantly, the importance of supervisor-focused dimensions (interpersonal justice and informational justice) over other dimensions is found. Interactional dimensions of justice are thought to be more relevant for organisations with organic structures as opposed to mechanistic structures, because in these types of organisations face-to-face communication and mutual respect. We focus particularly upon the supervisor-focused dimensions because these align more strongly with Maori. In Maori culture, kanohi ki te kanohi relates to face-to-face communication which is a traditional preference and an important and culturally critical concept which allows for all senses to be used as complementary sources of information. We expected and found that interpersonal and informational justice would be more relevance to Maori employees than other forms of justice (i.e. distributive and procedural justice). Indeed, these supervisor-focused justice dimensions mediated the influence of procedural and distributive justice, highlighting their importance for Maori employees.

Finally, Hofstede’s work on cultural differences also shows that within cultures, there can be variation, and the use of collectivistic orientation relating to work was found to further impact upon the influence of organisational justice on outcomes. Significant two-way and three-way interactions were found, highlighting the best outcomes for respondents were achieved through high supervisor-focused justice dimensions and high collectivism. Overall, we find that indigenous employees who are more collectivistic have superior job outcomes when they perceive higher supervisor-focused organisational justice.

To conclude, our paper confirms the influence of organisational justice amongst indigenous employees, and highlights the importance of interpersonal and informational justice over the influence of procedural and distributive justice towards these major job outcomes. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of considering workplace collectivism amongst employees from a collectivistic background, as this was found to have significant moderating effects.
WITHOUT A VOICE: INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN A TRANSFORMING SOCIETY:

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ABSTRACT

The contemporary Vietnamese industry relations (IR) environment is full of contradiction. It is traditionally centralised and highly regulated, evident in the compulsory presence of a trade union in any economic enterprise and the government’s dominant role in determining rules for labour – management relations in the form of central labour laws. On the other hand, since the economic reform, Doi Moi, which was initiated in 1986, the Vietnamese IR system has been undergoing dramatic reform in the last decade. There is a newly developed legislative base for trade unions to step out of the Party and State’s shadow and renew their organisation and activities to perform the function of workers’ representatives in protecting their rights and interests. However, there are signs of the government’s reluctance to give full power to unions and the transformation of trade unions is inhibited by financial difficulties. It is recognised that the constraints placed upon trade union activities necessarily affect and restrict the exercise of bargaining rights. In this context, this paper aims to examine the roles of trade unions in the clothing industry in Vietnam, focusing on the subsidiaries of multinational companies from Taiwan, Korea and Hong Kong. Going through some key trade unions’ organisational issues, such as organisational structure, expected roles and responsibilities and the constraints they meet with in realising such expectations, this paper points out that Vietnamese trade unions in the clothing industry do not appear to represent the workforce in any way and that their roles are limited to administrative functions and the provision of welfare-type services for employees. Almost all the unions were unable to perform their functions, with some union leaders unwilling to voice the concerns of workers, fearing that it may affect their jobs. The paper also recognises the formation and development of informal employee representatives. The paper confirms the concern that was voiced by ‘The Labourer’ – the official newspaper of VCGL, claiming that ‘the role of organised trade unions in protecting workers’ rights here [in Vietnam] is diminishing every day and is practically nonexistent’ (June 1, 1995).
ABSTRACT

One of the key management and leadership issues has been concern over the ability to manage in different countries and cultures. The models of leadership we have come across so far deal narrowly with this context. The country and culture in which an organisation operates is another critical aspect which creates other demands on corporate manager.
MEASURING PRODUCTIVITY, EFFICIENCY AND TECHNICAL PROGRESS OF THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY OF SINGAPORE, HONG KONG, KOREA AND TAIWAN USING DEA-BASED MALMQUIST PRODUCTIVITY INDICES:

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ABSTRACT

Using the Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA)-based Malmquist Productivity Index (MPI), this paper analyzes the productivity and the productivity changes of the construction industry of the four Asian Dragons, Singapore, Hong Kong, Korea and Taiwan, from 2000 to 2009. The MPI is decomposed into change in technical efficiency and technical progress, where the later captures the shift of the efficient production frontier (EPF). The results of our study reveal that as compared to Hong Kong, Korea and Taiwan, Singapore's construction industry had the lowest level of technical efficiency as it operated furthest away from the EPF. Korea's construction industry, on the other hand, consistently produced on the EPF. Furthermore, Singapore's construction industry was experiencing general decline in productivity from 2000 to 2007, worsening the efficiency gap with the other three countries. However, the sizable expansion of the Singapore's construction industry in 2008 and 2009 was accompanied by significant improvement in both technical efficiency and technical progress, allowing Singapore's construction industry to catch up with that of the other countries.

The paper will also examine whether Singapore's SMEs sector which also experiences low productivity can learn from the construction sector. The paper concludes with some policy suggestions for continued improvement in productivity in the construction sector and for raising productivity in other sectors such as SMEs.
A QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION INTO THE WORK DEMAND STRESSORS OF AUSTRALIAN DENTISTS:

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ABSTRACT

Globally, the reputation of dentistry as a stressful profession has long been reported, with some commentators arguing that dentistry is the most stressful health care profession and one of the most stressful of all professions. This belief, commonly held by dentists themselves, is often thought to be charged by the generally negative image of dentistry held by the public. Australian researchers regard dentistry as “the impossible profession” (Joffe 1996, p. 206) due to the difficulties encountered by practitioners in balancing the pressures of a dental career with family life and personal space. Despite concerns over the stress–strain relationship for Australian dentists, little research has been undertaken concerning what causes dentistry to be so stressful. The aim of this paper is to investigate job stressors among Australian dentists. A qualitative investigation explored dentists’ views of their work and of its effects on them. A semi-structured interview was administered to a purposive sample of 17 dentists working in the private sector. Dentists were asked about the stressors experienced in their day-to-day work. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed using the systematic technique of content analysis. The two most commonly reported stressors were working under constant time pressures and interpersonal relationships involving patients or staff. Results of the study indicate there is considerable variation in the number and type of stressors experienced by dentists. Reported stressors differ between dentists who own and operate their practice and those dentists who work as an assistant or associate dentist, with the former reporting a wider variety of stressors than the latter.

REFERENCES
ABSTRACT

The formal regulation of employment relations in Australia has undergone waves of change since the early. Successive federal governments have decried the 'inflexibility' of traditional industrial relations regulation and have sought to create a national industrial relations system with new mechanisms aimed at promoting greater flexibility at the workplace and sometimes, individual, level. During the tenure of the Howard government this desire for flexibility manifested itself through Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs) articulated first through the Workplace Relations Act 1996 and extended through the 2005 WorkChoices amendment to that Act. AWAs were heralded by some employer groups as a welcome break from collective and ‘rigid' industrial regulation. However, academic research into the use and character of AWAs revealed that they were often used as a means of reducing labour costs rather than as a means of adopting flexible work practices which contributed to productivity. Often this came at the expense of the wages and working conditions of employees, most particularly vulnerable labour market groups such as workers in low paid and precarious employment. With the defeat of the Howard government in the 2007 federal election, largely as a result of the unpopularity of their industrial relations strategies, the incoming Labor government moved to abolish the, by now, unpopular AWA. Transition arrangements were put in place making the establishment of new AWAs unlawful and providing a mechanism for the 'phase-out' of existing AWAs. Whilst these policy changes were welcomed by labour movement leaders, it provoked an unfavorable response from employers, particularly some of the more outspoken employer advocate groups, as in the mining sector, who wanted to continue to offer individual arrangements to their workers.

In seeking to be seen to be responsive to the concerns of business the government included a salvo to those seeking ‘individualisation'. The Fair Work Act 2009 thus contains a provision for the negotiation of Individual Flexibility Agreements (IFAs) ‘within’ the new collective bargaining regime which became operational on July 1 2010. This framework required that collective agreements explicitly allow for individual arrangements to be negotiated within particular circumstances. In cases where a collective agreement is lodged for approval with Fair Work Australia and it either does not include a clause which allows the making of an IFA or where FWA is not satisfied that the clause meets with the requirements of the Act, the 'model term' set out in the Fair Work Act, 2009 will be included in the agreements. This paper reports on exploratory research aiming to build knowledge of the establishment and early operation of IFAs under the Fair Work Act, 2009 and in so doing will contribute to the growing body of research on the operation of the new federal regulation of bargaining in Australia.
THE RECENT DEVELOPMENT OF MACAU ECONOMY AND ITS HR ISSUES:

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ABSTRACT

The economy of Macau has been booming since its handover to Mainland China, and a lot of foreign capitals and investments flowed into Macau’s economy. And hence the demand for human resources had also been increased dramatically at the same time. But, Macau is a very small city with tiny economic system. The total area of Macau is less than 30 square kilometers, and the local population is less than 500 thousands local residents. The labor force is so limited, with only 230 thousand working people. Therefore, the booming economy has caused Macau lack of working labor seriously in term of quantity and quality, as there are still a lot of local employees with low level of education and technical skills, and they are also usually at or above middle age. They are not easy to accommodate with the new economic changing environment. Generally speaking, the educational level of human resources in Macau is comparatively low. Most of the high paid managerial positions created by quick economic development were occupied by outsiders. These issues are now becoming more and more serious as the Macau economy keep expanding and growing. Therefore, this paper will introduce the recent economic environment of Macau, analyzes the human resources issues, especially its structural issues.
WORK–FAMILY CONFLICTS, FAMILY LEISURE ACTIVITIES, AND FAMILY FUNCTIONING IN HONG KONG:

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Po San WAN
Timothy Ka Ying WONG
Lok Yin LAI
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ABSTRACT

Work is perceived to be a major barrier to the amount and quality of time available for family use. Both adequate time and quality time are important for the well-being of a family. Among the various patterns in the use of family time, there is ample evidence of a positive relationship between participation in family leisure and family functioning. Despite the persistent trend of long working hours in Hong Kong, how work affects the involvement of workers in family leisure is under–examined in Hong Kong.

Guided by an ecological–systemic perspective (Agate, Zabriskie and Eggett, 2007; Voydanoff, 2002), a random sample telephone survey was conducted in November 2010. A total of 1,002 respondents were successfully interviewed. From the results of the survey, it was found that work–family conflict has restricted an involvement in family leisure activities and increased the burden on those members of the family who are responsible for organizing leisure activities for the family. Furthermore, work–family conflict, together with the burden of organizing family leisure activities, has cumulative negative impact on family functioning. A family–friendly work policy, including childcare support, flexible working hours, and employer–sponsored family leisure activities, should be further promoted in Hong Kong.
ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the impact of stressor- and resource-based work characteristics, including a widened array of organizational justice resources, on three indicators of mental health (psychological wellbeing, distress and depression) over a 12-month period using surveys of Australian law enforcement officers (n = 143). Baseline psychological wellbeing was controlled for in each analysis. Job demand was associated with psychological wellbeing and distress one year later. There were no significant direct effects between the task-level resources of job control or social support or the broader organizational justice resource and mental health. The results indicate that the impact of task level resources on mental health may be indirect and limited. In particular, increased levels of job control and work-based social support may buffer against the impact of job demands on psychological wellbeing. The results of this study are in contrast to recent trends emphasising resources, with the present results giving primacy to stressors in the form of job demands. Over the long term the consequences of demands have adaptation effects that are detrimental to mental health, whereas the capacity for job-related resources to protect employees may be primarily restricted to short-term amelioration.
ABSTRACT

Despite a shift towards long-term sustainable HRM practices, many organisations still continue to make decisions with a short-term focus (Barney & Wright, 1998). Should those decisions were made in consultation with HRM, there would be a low risk arising out of those decisions. Recent research identifies that defective knowledge would lead to defective strategies down the stream in the decision making process. Those defects have been referred to as decisions gaps.

Such gaps could have adverse affect on performance. The aim of this paper is to identify those gaps, trace their origin with the view of improving the decision making process and in turn performance.

This field of research is uncharted in this context and could prove invaluable to the many organisations looking for answers to defective decision making problem.

The central research problem presented in this paper will be to investigate an HRM model used by organisations and determine if there are gaps, why they occur, and then examine the role of HRM in improving the overall performance by avoiding or minimizing those gaps.

An example of discrepancies between Line Managers Requests for services from the HR department and what is actually being delivered by HR department will be used. Those discrepancies could incur additional costs for reworking and rectifying associated problems. This could be a cause of wastage in time and resources. To avoid this unnecessary wastage and costs, it is proposed to study and analyze the process of HRM and Line Managers order requests and order fulfillment.

Evidence suggests that should HRM adopt the practice of decision-making based on gap-free knowledge, improvement could be significantly improved. This paper will present a method for improving decision making by identifying gaps and also suggest ways to either eliminate or reduce the impact of those gaps on decision making.
ABSTRACT

In order to tackle three critical issues, namely, high unemployment, a worsening income distribution and global warming, simultaneously, many governments around the world have adopted the strategy of promoting a green economy. Recently, many businesses have also been turning themselves into green businesses to strengthen their competitiveness. In view of the consistent decline in trade union membership worldwide, some have argued that trade unions should also go green by helping their employers become green businesses and therefore helping their members to get green jobs which are more stable, better paid and that provide better working conditions than traditional jobs. However, there is no guarantee that green jobs are more stable and better paid than traditional jobs. Therefore, there has also arisen an argument that Asian countries should look to their own culture and search for a different type of IR system which is a better fit for their own culture and able to provide more stable and better jobs.
LEVERAGING SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES FOR FOSTERING EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION IN TRADE UNIONS: A NEW PERSPECTIVE:

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ABSTRACT

A review of the existing literature suggests that although most industrialized countries have seen a drop in union membership rates, in past years the drop in union density (the unionized proportion of the working population) has been more significant in Indian context. Some popular explanations that pin this decline to a reduced popularity of unionization among workers and the general public include small size of unions, multiplicity of trade unions and rivalries, leadership issues, politicization of trade unions etc. One of the major causes why the new age industrial worker does not covet to join trade union is the lack of knowledge, of trade unions and the advantage of joining trade unions. The current study is an effort in this direction, where it has been argued that Social networking sites (a new mode of social network concept) can be used as an effective tool, by unions for informing/convincing workers of unionism’s benefits, which is otherwise difficult to perceive without experience. Social networking sites also can be leveraged by the trade unions to increase their union membership by reaching out to more and more employees as well as creating a brand image for themselves. In this paper, based on the literature review and analysis, a framework linking employee participation, union membership, and social networking sites has been suggested, thus offering a new perspective of “social networking” in the industrial relations area.
A few years ago, economists used the term ‘new economy’ to designate a world in evolution. Attention was drawn to the fact that while some people think that the new economy has been and gone, others believe that there never was any ‘new economy’. Of the powerful forces driving organizational change are, technology, globalization, the increasing value of intangible assets and the ‘war for talent’. These forces are reshaping the way businesses manage their relationships in varying national, regional and international contexts, with people, and with other corporate entities. From an ethical perspective, organizations are expected to operate in a more open way and be more accountable. There is also the expectation that the organization functions on the basis of a social contract with its employees and other stakeholder groups. To enhance the quality of work life, the business corporation should, amongst other things, minimize the negative impact of decision-making on the society and on the environment. If the business executive believes it is important to provide his workforce with an ethical environment, he should ensure some basic conditions are fulfilled. These would include leading by example and investing in human resource development by offering training in ethics to the worker population. Rather than be restricted to communicating standards of ethics and manuals spelling out company policy, ethics training should be given a different dimension, whereby employees are taught how to apply ethics in practice. Everyone should have the necessary skills required to handle ethical dilemmas commonly encountered in work contexts. A management team that believes in the essence of ethical leadership would respect corporate governance guidelines and inspire ethical behavior amongst its workforce. This is a way of securing people’s commitment amidst times of crisis, while preserving the goodwill of the organization.

This paper addresses the weaknesses facing the global economy and the organization, in a crisis situation, and proposes some potential solutions to be operated at a micro–level. Referring to the current economic crisis, emphasis is laid on problems commonly experienced in a global context that is, declining values often resulting in conflicting situations, negatively impacting on employment relations and ultimately on the bottom–line. One way to work around such issues is to set up proper communication systems, reinforce values, nurture the right attitude, and manage employment relations in a professional context, by having recourse to well–devised compliance programs. Compliance programs help establish and disseminate a shared set of organizational values that guide employee behavior. One of the key objectives of such programs is maintain a satisfactory level of corporate and social responsibility, good employment relations and a healthy work environment.
THE IMPLICATION FOR HRM POLICIES OF THE EXPERIENCES OF MIGRANT NURSES IN A REMOTE AREA HOSPITAL IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA:

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ABSTRACT

The systematic examination of what happens to migrant nurses who come to work in Australia in remote area locations as a result of international migration is scarce. There is a chronic shortage of nurses in all States of Australia and a desperate need to provide communities with a range of professional health services expected in a developed country like Australia. The sustainability of an international nursing workforce is a human resource development issue and depending on how employers treat and enhance this precious resource, to a large extent, determines the success of the integration and retention of migrating nurses (Eggert 2005, 4). This exploratory study highlights this important issue by analysing the experiences and challenges faced by African nurses migrating to Australia on temporary 457 visas. Using a phenomenological research design, semi structured interviews allowed the migrant nurses to express their personal feelings and thoughts, behaviours and actions and provided an understanding of what they encountered both pre and post migration to a remote area hospital in Western Australia. Participants felt more excited than fearful in migrating to Australia. Although the migration process was described as stressful most nurses considered themselves extremely fortunate for the opportunity to live in a developed country. It appears that anxiety voiced in this study stemmed from a fear of the unknown and separation anxiety from their immediate family. In summary, whilst participants overall were satisfied with general information provided to them pre-migration concerning the culture, lifestyle, types of accommodation, modes of transport, currency and food prices in Australia they expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of relevant and specific information relating to the remote area location and hospital where they would be working and living. This research provides valuable information and data for Human Resource specialists and Health Care managers on the effectiveness of the 457 visa sponsorship program accepting migrant nurses into Australia and contributes to the existing body of literature covering the international migration of nurses.
ISSUES IN STUDENT CENTRED AND BLENDED LEARNING:

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ABSTRACT

The advent of new educational technologies such as computer programs and the ability to deliver course content on-line, combined with changing student demographics and a changing and complex business environment, has led to the development of new approaches to student teaching and learning. One such approach is the use of ‘blended’ learning where the use of traditional lectures and tutorials is supplemented, and often replaced to some extent, by new approaches to learning such as computer and on-line simulations, and other interactive on-line packages, such as 'MyWritingLab', designed to cover more basic aspects of the curriculum (or provide remedial support) in the students’ own time. This change brings with it opportunities to enhance and enrich student learning. However, there are issues relating to the integration of the new and traditional aspects of the curriculum particularly where large class sizes are involved, that must be addressed first.

The paper begins by addressing the potential benefits that can be achieved by introducing new approaches to learning into the curriculum. This section examines strategies designed to help students become independent, self-directed learners. It discusses the characteristics of today’s students and argues that many students lack effective learning strategies when they come to university, and that it is therefore important to teach them strategies for successful learning. Reflection and simulation activities will be used to explain student centred learning methods that can be used to improve teaching and learning.

The paper then discusses some of the potential issues that need to be considered when using innovative teaching strategies in a blended learning setting. A key issue is one of how to seamlessly integrate the traditional teaching methods used with the new approaches. Examples of blended units are given where, despite best intentions, the computer/on-line components run like a separate ‘course within a course’. These include the use of a computer simulation in an employment relations unit, and the use of on-line programs such as ‘MyWritingLab’ to replace parts of traditional classes in an introductory business skills unit.

Another key issue discussed is the need to develop appropriate administrative systems and support for blended learning units. It is suggested that this aspect is often overlooked, but it is often a significant source of problems, particularly where liaison with providers of computer and on-line material is required. It is also suggested that these problems can quickly multiply where large numbers of students are involved.

The paper concludes that new approaches to teaching such as student centred and blended learning offer considerable possibilities to enhance the student experience, but only if proper attention is paid to integrating the ‘new’ and ‘old’ aspects of the teaching program, as well as to the development of appropriate administrative systems and support.
WORK, LIFE, ENVIRONMENT: THE REALITY OF A DEREGULATED WORKING LIFE IN AUSTRALIA OR DEATH OF THE LUCKY COUNTRY FOR SOME:

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ABSTRACT

Australia was once an icon of social justice in employment standards. The standards of employment conditions in Australia were not so long ago at the vanguard of global employment conditions. Successive Australian governments have maintained preserving minimum employment standards but the level of these has fallen during recent years under both conservative and labor governments. Union membership has fallen and indeed some see the death of unions. Yet Australia appears globally as the ‘lucky country’. This paper examines the depth and validity of this notion by examining the employment conditions of employees in the retail environment. The major retail industry union, the SDA, appears to be relatively strong. The conclusion reached in this study is that the work, life and environment balance of employees in the retail industry is deteriorating in the Australian context. The implications of this study are thought to be far reaching.
ABSTRACT

Younger Australians are often regarded as being more focused on non-work pursuits and more committed to environmental issues than their elders. Many employers are concerned about how best to attract and retain these Gen Y employees. Research suggests that they are less committed to employers, have a shorter duration of employment in a job and seek ‘feel good’ satisfiers at work. Politicians believe that this generation is more committed to environmental issues than their predecessors. But how accurate are these notions? Both logic and some research suggest that individuals who lack commitment in one sphere of their lives are likely to evidence lack of commitment in other aspects. Perhaps notions of commitment need to be revisited. The focus of this paper is directed to understanding contemporary notions of work, life and the environment and the relationship between these variables. A small study of under-30 year old Australians living in the city of Sydney was undertaken to identify their attitudes to work, life and the environment. The results of this study suggest that Gen Y may be misunderstood and that their attitudes are best understood contextually.
EDUCATING TRANSCULTURAL MANAGERS FOR OPEN ENVIRONMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS:

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ABSTRACT

Transcultural management leadership is a new area of study in business schools. For the past few years our department of Languages, Culture and Society at the Rouen School of Management has been developing a program on Cultural Studies and Cross Cultural Responsible Management practices for executive education. The contributions of poststructuralist thinkers in the fields of philosophy, cultural studies, literary criticism, art theory, film and communication studies serve as the theoretical corpus for our teachings. Intertextual relationships and non-sequential practices in management organizations show us how the configuration of a transversal manager is gaining recognition in our European environments.

We will see how understanding from different perspectives certain concepts related to management and organizations we can contribute to the creation of open organizations implementing corporate systemic practices with the help of humanists’ expertises (social and human sciences thinkers). To understand how we develop a critical thinking approach towards the education of a transcultural manager in a poststructuralist environment, we start by deconstructing some basic concepts related to the teaching on how governance of corporations is basically understood.

Our purpose, deconstructing traditional practices for unique models of management, is to demonstrate how a background in humanities and liberal arts are necessary tools for the education of responsible leaders. The emergence of transversal approaches for the configuration of alternative management models in open organizations helped us to better understand the importance of transcultural management education in our XXIst century globally responsible environments.

The web of relationships that transversal managers establish in our interdependent and self-transcending ecosystem gives us the possibility to embrace a revolutionary vision in a second European Enlightenment responsible period. Since the emerging of the concept of “global village” 50 years ago, we will see how we are experiencing in management practices the impact of new technologies in our geopolitical environments. Emailing, Google, twitter, Facebook and the World Wide Web are new tools for a cyber global decentred and open community that permanently exchanges information, ideas, feelings and transcultural business practices. The need for corporate democracy and open organizations is, as we try to prove in our paper, a consequence of a radical way to share information and knowledge in a virtual community of learners and collective decision makers.
ABSTRACT

This study examines the extent to which nurses are impacted by bullying for the outcomes of wellbeing, psychological distress, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Two hundred and sixty nurses working in an acute care hospital were surveyed. One-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) and two-way ANCOVAs were conducted to assess the relationships between bullying and particular demographic characteristics on psychological and organisational outcomes. Scores on negative affectivity were used as a covariate to control for potential perceptual biases. Hospital nurses who experienced bullying reported higher levels of psychological distress, as well as lower commitment and job satisfaction levels. Significant main effects of the demographic variables were found for tenure and employment type on psychological distress and job satisfaction, respectively. The covariate of negative affectivity was significant for all of the analyses. Hospital nurses are effected by bullying across psychological and organisational outcomes above and beyond the effects of negative affectivity. Thus, workplace bullying not only affects the way they perceive their job and organisation, but also their general mental health. Negative affectivity and certain demographic characteristics are also influential and worthy of consideration in studies of bullying among nurses.
The Rajabhat University Act (2004) provided the main guideline for every Rajabhat University to transform and implement policies to become a new university. The administrators have more freedom and authority to run their universities, but at the same time they have to take responsibility for their decisions and are responsible for managing their own finances. The six Rajabhat Universities located in Bangkok accepted that challenge and developed different strategies. The impetus for change in the six Rajabhat Universities was initiated more from external rather than internal factors. Everyone who was involved with the six Rajabhat Universities could not avoid this impact. The three steps model of Lewin can be used to explain the way that the six universities responded to change. The Unfreezing had been performed by the Presidents by introducing new policies and using personal skills and experiences to persuade and control staff. The moving processes have been done by providing resources and many workshops to change staff attitudes and to increase their knowledge. The refreezing process had been done by giving rewards or punishment to staff who can or cannot achieve the goals of the universities. Three important factors related to the changes in Human Resource Management (HRM) policies have been identified in this study. First is the role of leadership in bringing about change. Second is the process of change and change management that was introduced to HRM policies. Finally are the results of changes that have been implemented in their work and life. The study reveals that Thailand higher educational institutions were influenced by environmental change and some factors, not considered important in all of the universities, were very important in bringing about change in other universities. Change is complicated and difficult to identify and manage. Only experienced leaders and change agents who have skills in motivating others working in the university can become successful at leading change.
FROM KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT TO LEARNING ORGANIZATION TO INNOVATION: ROLE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP:

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the role of transformational leadership in moving an organisation from being a knowledge based, learning organisation to become an innovative company.

Important features of the leader such as ability to assist in developing and accommodating the implementation of knowledge management techniques, learning organisation concepts and innovation protocols will be discussed in this paper.

This paper demonstrates that shifting from organisational learning to becoming an innovative company involves a unique transformation leadership. In that regards, the paper also demonstrates that organisations need to create, capture, transfer, and mobilize knowledge before it can be used be used for innovation. Although technology supports the latter, these are primarily social processes within a cultural environment, and cultural change, however necessary, is a particularly challenging undertaking for the transformational leadership.

The paper will present results of a study in assessing how leaders of successful companies found innovation as a way to create value for customers, that is a way to help customers obtain value for the goods and/or services.

The paper also considers key innovation processes in those successful companies and examines how transformational leaders have used those processes to deliver value in a way and how they used innovation as opportunity to:

1. Address the needs of customers (especially customers in emerging markets) who could be denied access to markets entirely because existing solutions are too expensive or complicated for them such as in emerging markets.
2. Leveraging new technology in the company’s business model around innovation.
3. Respond to a shifting basis of competition and thus defining new acceptable solution in dynamic markets.
ROLE OF HRM IN MANAGING SUPPLY CHAIN DEFECTS (GAPS):

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ABSTRACT

Performance of organisations could be improved by reducing or eliminating deficiencies (or gaps) in quality, cost and speed of delivery of goods and/or services to customers.

In doing so, organisations and in particular the Human Resources departments need to identify source(s) of defects and of course design and implement techniques for reducing or avoiding gaps in quality, cost and speed of delivery of goods and/or services.

Such techniques could assist in identifying defects in decisions related to quality, cost and delivery time of goods and/or services. Reasons for such defects (gaps) including the methodology for their identification are discussed and presented in this paper.

This paper also examines the role of mapping in determining gaps in quality, cost and speed of delivery of goods and/or services.

The approach used in this study is believed to be the first study of its kind. The proposed model will highlight the benefits of applying the concept of identification of gaps in global supply chain companies. It is anticipated that the findings from this research will assist managers to better manage supply chain activities. It is also hoped that this study will be helpful for further research in the future.
SPIRITUALITY–INFORMED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING FOR ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERS:

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ABSTRACT

For a long time, researchers and practitioners have avoided paying attention to spirituality by taking a compartmentalized approach in viewing work–life in organizations. However, experience tells us that it is no longer possible and productive to keep work–life separate from family, social and religious activities. For organizational leaders to be effective in today’s world, it calls for the need to address issues of spirituality at the workplace. In this paper, we propose a conceptual framework to foster leadership development through spirituality–informed experiential learning derived from the insights of Dewey and Kolb’s seminal works on experiential learning. We extended Kolb’s experiential learning framework by incorporating the spiritual dimension into the framework. We further argue that spiritual development in organizational leaders involve the whole person – head, heart, body and soul. In addition, the need to stay connected with a community is important in fostering spirituality–informed experiential learning. We concluded by discussing the practical implications and avenues for future research in testing our framework.
ABSTRACT

Australia is currently enjoying one of the lowest unemployment rates at 4.9% (ABS, 2011) and current public discussion is on the skilled labour force shortage. However, for many people they continue to be unemployed for extended period of time or simply become 'not in the labour force' as they stop actively looking for work.

This paper presents findings from a mixed method research study undertaken in four different states in Australia from 2009 to 2011. It involves consultation with service providers and stakeholders on their experience of working with long-term jobless individuals; and the individuals themselves on their experience of being jobless. The methodology used consisted of one-to-one interviews; focus groups discussion; and completion of an anonymous survey instruments. Data was collected from 200 individuals and over 100 stakeholders. The issues explored included barriers of using the service(s); challenges for individuals in gaining employment; gaps in services provided; and how well the services work together. A number of barriers identified have been described by other research but others, such as their being too many applicants, being considered too old for the job, or the need to have a car and a licence to simply be considered for a job. Multi-methods were described by jobless as having been used to try to source employment, such as on-line ads, in contrast to those detailed by service providers. The other findings was the growing expectations of prospective employers in terms of language, education and other abilities; and lack of disability or injury, of prospective employees given their economic pressures of rising insurance premiums.

The findings of this study are significant in providing some direction to policy makers in assisting this increasingly forgotten group and the growing public debate in Australia and other countries to further tighten the requirements imposed on this group of social security recipients.
ABSTRACT

The literature has shown that most immigrants report a negative career experience in their newly adopted English-speaking countries. In particular, they complained of loss in income and status, especially for those migrating from non-English speaking countries. The Social Psychology literature has demonstrated that ethnic identity can influence an immigrant’s perception of the fairness of organizational recruitment and job acceptance intention. However, little is known of the impact of immigrants’ ethnic identity and how this affects their career experience. This is the subject of the current paper which draws on the literature on ethnic identity and social cognition career theory to examine the career experience of 196 ‘visible racial minority’ individuals in Australia. These individuals were immigrants from Asia (first generation Asian Australians) and Asian-born Australians (second generation Asian Australians) in Australia. Data were collected from face-to-face and online surveys. Data analyses were conducted using Partial Least Squares modeling, a form of Structural Equation Modelling, to test the hypothesized relationships. The findings showed that visible racial minority individuals reported that their level of self esteem is positively influenced by the pride in their ethnic background. Individuals who possessed more self esteem tended to report fewer experiences of being discriminated against in the workplace. Individuals who were proud of their ethnic background tended to report having experienced more culturally-related career barriers in the workplace. Individuals who were actively engaged in their ethnic communities were more likely to accept job offers which were below their capabilities and qualifications. However, those who reported higher levels of self esteem were more confident in not accepting inferior job offers. Our findings provide support for the need to consider ethnic identity when developing career counseling strategies for Asian immigrants. Theoretical and practical implications are also discussed.
STRESSORS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF COPING STRATEGIES IN NURSING: A CROSS LAG ANALYSIS:

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ABSTRACT

Nursing has been acknowledged as one of the most stressful occupations in Australia. There is a continuing level of reform and organizational change within the sector, which has added more challenges for nurses employed in health care organizations. However, there have not been many studies to examine if administrative stressors, that is, the stressors caused by the increase in the extent of administrative and clerical responsibilities in nursing, would lead to more nursing stress and job outcomes. We distributed an online survey to 306 Australian nurses to identify their experience with administrative stressors in June 2008. A second survey was sent out six months later to the same respondents to solicit their experience with nursing stress, coping strategies, job satisfaction, psychological wellbeing and intention to quit. Matched data were collected from 119 nurses and these were used to test the path model developed for this study. The analysis showed that time 1 stressors caused by administrative and clerical duties led to an increase in nursing stress in time 2. Nurses who experienced more nursing stress were not effective in using coping strategies to deal with the increased level of administrative and nursing stress. As a result, they reported a lower level of job satisfaction in time 2. Conversely, nurses who were effective in using coping strategies were found to have a higher level of job satisfaction. Those reporting a lower level of job satisfaction reported a higher level of psychological strain, which ultimately led to a higher level of intention to quit. Our findings have theoretical and practical implications, which were discussed in relation to job design in Australian health care organizations.
Construction is an important contributor to GDP growth, with its powerful impact on other parts of the economy and employment. The construction industry in developing countries is of a much higher importance as it remains a pillar of the countries’ industrialization and a source of their sustainable economic growth in terms of infrastructure construction etc. However, many topical issues which have implications for the construction industry have, so far, only been discussed to a significant extent in the context of the industrialized countries rather than developing countries (Ofori, 2000). Besides, the economies of many developing countries are currently beset by a combination of higher energy costs, falling exchange rates and rising inflation. At the same time, immense social problems like a rising urban population and unemployment are tightening the nation’s resources and capabilities. Therefore, it would be more meaningful to take a look at the construction industry in developing countries. Specifically, as mentioned by Ofori (2000), the construction industry in a typical developing country would involuntarily face a dilemma, that is, it should continue to help the national economies to recover, and also contribute to the easing of the social problems despite the severe constraints in its operating environment. In this sense, measuring efficiency in the construction industry could provide a helpful tool to support setting up policies and strategic decisions, which could in turn better improve the performances of the construction industry in the developing countries. This paper then would like to address and analyze the efficiency issue from the perspective of the developing countries, especially, Malaysia.
LEADERS IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:
WHAT IT TAKES TO BECOME AN EFFECTIVE HR PROFESSIONAL:

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ABSTRACT

Effective leadership is crucial in any organisation and the HR Department, together with line management, plays an important role in attracting, motivating and retaining talents. The HR scene in Singapore has been getting more and more exciting over the past two years. The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) hosted an Executive Roundtable in May 2009, the theme of which was Leadership in Asia: Challenges and Opportunities. It spearheaded the first Singapore Human Capital Summit in September that year. In addition, MOM sets up a new Human Capital Leadership Institute (HCLI) in partnership with the Singapore Management University (SMU) with the specific aim to become “the premier institution for raising human capital management capabilities in Asia”. SIM University will be launching its Master of Human Capital Management and Bachelor of HRM with Military Studies Degrees in July 2011, to complement its Bachelor of HRM program which has been offered since July 2008. In the Continuing Education and Training (CET) front, Singapore Workforce Development Agency’s HR WSQ framework has provided a solid foundation for the building up of human capital in the country.

Meanwhile, there are numerous developments in the Singapore employment scene that any HR professional can hardly ignore. They include the government’s push for re-employment, the war for talent, new channels for recruitment, workforce diversity, managing across cultures, nurturing and empowering talent, trust building and staff engagement, productivity improvement, teamwork and organisational effectiveness, work–life integration, HR best practices, building SMEs’ HR capability, and so forth.

There is little doubt that the HR fraternity will continue to play an important role (as a HR champion) that impact businesses bottom line through the effective management of human capital. The question is this: how can HR become a more effective contributor to organisations? Simply speaking, we can examine this issue at two levels. At the strategic level, senior HR professionals (HR directors, managers) must be competent in three critical areas, namely strategic partnership, change agent, and employee relations expert. They must be able to conduct effective strategic alignment (aligning human capital with business strategy).

This does not mean that the formulation of business strategies has excluded HR issues and considerations all these years. Rather, the proper alignment must be in place. Here, we are assuming that an organisation’s business strategy is always “correct”. This need not be the case. People strategy can fail because of the wrong business strategy. To be an effective business partner, HR professionals must be able solicit top management support. They must be comfortable with leading and managing different types of change. They have to be confident in designing and building high commitment organisations. They must know the different ways of evaluating human capital programmes and initiatives and relate them to the business needs of their organisations.

At the more operational level, HR professionals (junior managers, executives) must be competent in three different areas: administrative expert, employee relations expert, and possibly change agent. To be an administrative expert, they must have a basic understanding of financial and managerial accounting, statistics, contract and agency law, employment laws and legal issues, as well as total reward design and management. To be an employee relations expert, they need to equip themselves with some knowledge of organisational psychology and cross cultural intelligence, and know how to deal with employee/industrial relations issues as well as facilitate negotiations and manage organisational conflict. Finally, an effective change agent means that he/she is in the position to attract and select talent, create organisational capability through learning and
development, design talent and performance management policies and practices, as well as conduct career development counseling.

Even though one has acquired the necessary HR knowledge and tools from training and professional education, there are certain attributes that are essential to any HR practitioner: integrity, professionalism, personal drive and networking ability. When equipped with these four key attributes, HR professionals will become a more confident and persuasive leader. “Integrity is the essence of everything successful”, R. Buckminister Fuller remarked. Indeed, ethical practices affect not only the individual person but also the rise and fall of organisations. Ethical treatment of employees involves aspects such as hiring and firing, occupational risk, transparency, whistle-blowing, discrimination and harassment.

In addition to professionalism and integrity, successful persons tend to have enormous personal drive. They have a vast network of friends in different fields. One way to build up our personal HR network is to be an active member of professional organisation(s) and participate in their numerous activities and events. In Singapore, the organisation that seeks to represent the HR fraternity is the Singapore Human Resources Institute (SHRI). It is fast expanding and they have in store a number of initiatives that are of particular relevance to the HR professionals. Participating in Human Capital Singapore (HCS)’s HR Communities of Practice (CoPs) will also be highly beneficial.

Last but not least, HR professionals must be able to conquer fears and uncertainties. Erich Fromm once said, “Creativity requires the courage to let go of certainties”. It has been argued that good judgment comes from our own experience. Indeed, very often, we learn and build up our experience through bad judgments! The focus of this presentation will be on a deeper understanding of the attributes and qualities required of effective HR practitioners by examining the current state of HRM teaching/training in Singapore, all of which will help to shape the HR profession on the one hand and the country’s human capital capability on the other.
THE LINKAGE OF TRUST, COMMUNICATION OPENNESS IN THE WORKPLACE, AND JOB SATISFACTION: A CASE STUDY:

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the relationship between trust, openness, and job satisfaction in a large Indonesian company. The study applies quantitative methods in order to undertake a communications audit of the case study organization. Descriptive statistics and Pearson’s product moment correlations are applied to analyse the survey. The results show that trust and openness were positively related to employee’s job satisfaction dimensions. The discussion reviews the implications of these results and suggests future directions for research.
UNION MERGER IN SINGAPORE:

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ABSTRACT

Over the past few decades, waves of union mergers have been observed in many countries. Unions have merged for many reasons, ranging from membership decline to changes in industrial structures. In the past decade, several union mergers have also occurred in Singapore. Recent mergers include those in the healthcare and education sector. The banking sector and the taxi associations are also in the midst of merger discussions.

The issue of union mergers has ignited the interest of many researchers. Researchers have sought to gain a deeper understanding of union mergers through surveys, interviews and the analysis of official merger documents. Although these studies provide useful insights into the union mergers, the findings may not directly applicable in the context of Singapore. This is because of the unique nature of Singapore's industrial relations and legal framework.

This paper aims to provide deeper understanding of the union merger process in Singapore by examining the merger between the Healthcare Corporation of Singapore Staff Union (HCSSU) and the National University Hospital Employees Union (NUHEU). Information regarding this merger is collected through interviews with the parties involved in or affected by this merger. The paper begins with a review of the research literature and attempts to build on the trade union merger model proposed by Chaison (1986). Next, it gives an overview of the industrial relations framework and trade unions legislation in Singapore. This is followed by an analysis of the merger between NUHEU and HCSSU. The next section discusses the role of the labour federation in union mergers. Finally, the paper concludes with the lessons that can be drawn from Singapore's experience.
Housing bubble has been a serious concern in China’s big cities during the past decade. Housing buyers are concerned about their current and future accessibility to a reasonable shelter, while governments are concerned about the efficiency of the housing market, the leading role of the housing industry in economic growth and the social equity in housing conditions. Learning from the sub-prime loan crisis in US, national risk management in housing markets adds a further consideration in housing industry regulation. Development of the housing market in China, however, is far from ideal in solving the above problems. A recent development in China’s industrial policy indicates that housing industry is no longer considered a leading industry in Chinese economy. With the earlier government cooling down policy and the hit of world economic crisis, a downward turning point appeared in China’s housing market, but the issue of negative effects of bubbles, market uncertainty and future policy adjustment remain. What is the real role of construction industry in China’s economy? How should the construction industry and housing markets be managed? It should be meaningful to shed a light on these questions for appropriate policy and healthy economy.

This paper aims to examine the overall role of construction industry in Chinese economy. Housing market behaviour pattern, housing price determinants and related housing policies in big cities in China will be discussed. Secondly, the main external effects of the housing industry will be evaluated too, namely the leading role of the housing industry in economic growth and the effects in social equity.

The primary results show that the housing bubble’s existence is undoubtedly consistent with the direct observation. The long term housing price driving factors are however the fast urbanization, steady income increase, floating capital, and the widened income distribution gap. The leading role of housing industry to the economic growth is strong and affordability of housing to the majority of people is a problem. Policy implication is that local cities need to monitor the land productivity and housing prices closely in order to judge the efficiency of housing market. Due to the nature of government controlled and non-competitive land market in China, judgment of right housing policy is essential and maintaining an appropriate housing price is essential to healthy housing market. Subsidy on housing to low income households is a necessity and encouragement of property development must be balanced with the restriction on speculation.